

MULTICULTURALISM IN 20TH CENTURY AZERBAIJANI AND ENGLISH PROSE (BASED ON AZIZA JAFARZADEH'S "ELDAN ELA" AND DORIS LESSING'S "THE GRASS IS SINGING")

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Summary

In order to establish cooperation in the modern world, it is first necessary to achieve tolerance and multiculturalism in interpersonal relations. Multiculturalism primarily means ethnic, racial, religious, cultural diversity and values, and mutually tolerant relations with those values determine civilized moral and ethical criteria and values. It is an indisputable historical fact that the people who settled in Azerbaijan, regardless of their religion or language, lived in conditions of mutual understanding and tolerance in all periods of history. Even in the oldest examples of Azerbaijani literature, multicultural values have very deep roots. These values constitute the main line of the creativity of not only Azerbaijan, but also the wordsmiths and writers of the whole world. The highest criterion of personality is humanity, human relations, more precisely, tolerance. That is why representatives of other nations occupy a special place in the works of many writers who do not accept racial, national and religious discrimination. The fact that such improvement takes place through a multicultural environment once again strengthens the idea that multiculturalism has an important role in the real progress and development of humanity. The comparative study and evaluation of these issues in the work of Aziza Jafarzadeh, a bright figure of Azerbaijani literary prose, and a talented representative of English literature, Doris Lessing, is of great importance.

Key words: multiculturalism, coexistence, religious beliefs, tolerance.

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1. Introduction

Aziza Jafarzadeh, a well-known representative of realist historical prose in Azerbaijani literature, and the Nobel Prize laureate Doris Lessing, a prominent writer of English literature, used historical events to determine the main directions of the ethnogenesis of peoples and to reveal the features of people's memory against the background of the historical realities they recreated. In the works written by both writers, there is a set of humanistic worldviews and views that recognize the rights of the representatives of different peoples, the struggle of women, the reflection of Eastern philosophy, the philosophy of multiculturalism when approached from the prism of the problem of coexistence. In the second and third stages of Aziza Jafarzadeh's creativity, the historical novel genre is a priority. His outstanding works – "I have a voice in the world", "Return to the homeland", "Baku-1501", "Jalaliyya", "Sabir", "Eldan ela", "The tragedy of a voice", "Before "Gulistan" ", "Zarrintaj-Tahira", "Toward the Light", "Trouble", "Rubaba-Sultanım", "Tears of the Khazar", "Sultan of Love" novels are a manifestation of the writer's talent, hard work and fruitful searches. Since fragmentation is avoided in these works, the living panorama of the era, the continuous processes of events are given in unity. In addition to these, the

writer's novels are distinguished by the clarity of language and style, the originality of the writing style, the cross-line fable, the variety of characters and situations, and the internal dynamics of the described events and stories.

Aziza Jafarzade says: "If a heart does not have love for its people, nation, time, people of its time, how can it write?! You won't believe the writer, you won't believe it if you read it... In the historical works written by Aziza Jafarzadeh and Doris Lessing, who make us believe what we read and skillfully diagnose the "arrhythmia" of history, the issue of love for the motherland is at the forefront. Asifa Telman gizi Aliyeva, Ph.D. in philology, notes in her monograph "The Artistic World of Aziza Jafarzade" that the subjects of Aziza Jafarzade's historical works are diverse. In this regard, his works are characterized as follows:

1. Revival of literary and historical figures;
2. Creating an artistic picture of the historical period or historical events in the context of the current time period;
3. Highlighting the unstudied pages of our national history;
4. Artistic reflection of issues that shed light on our national-ethnic tragedies;
5. Turning to history to solve any problem that is relevant today. (*Telmangizi, 2002, p. 85*)

The direction of the artistic interpretation of A. Jafarzade's works "From the beginning", "Toward the light" (1998), "Zarrintaj – Tahira" (1996) written in the 90s of the last century is based on the ideological directions of our history – Alawism, Nematullahism, Bektashiism, Babilism, Bahatism. It is true that the image of some personalities is created here. However, as a whole, the writer aimed at the artistic understanding of these sects within Islam and aimed to reconcile Islam and secularism.

2. Main text

The novel "Eldan-ela" dedicated to the life and activities of prominent scholar, traveler, poet Zeynalabdin Shirvani, who has an important place in Aziza Jafarzade's creativity, is a very rich and effective literary and artistic work. Since the novel "Eldan-Ela" is written in a simple, witty, attractive style typical of Aziza Jafarzade's work, it affects the reader from the first sentences and forces him to experience the excitement of alternating events and situations throughout the plot. The internal structure of the novel, with its completeness and integrity, does not only carry an artistic-aesthetic feature, it allows to revive a lively, dynamic picture of the historical period as an example of a person's life. As candidate of philology Arif Zeynalli correctly noted, "the characters depicted in Aziza Jafarzade's novels are presented with all the lines of their character and inner world, so they have a natural and vivid effect and are memorable" (*Zeynalli, 2001, p. 44*). This work was created by adding additions to the writer's story "We are glad to see you, traveler". The novel consists of three parts: "Childhood", "Youth", "Perfection". In the indicated parts, the writer talks about the path of personal development, maturity and universal ideas of his hero. Although the events in the work begin in Shamakhi, they are related to the countries visited by Zeynalabdin, who traveled all over the world with the love of understanding man and the main purpose of his creation, learning the customs and culture of other nations. Here, the author showed that Zeynalabdin Shirvani was received with great sympathy in Iran, Egypt, India, Khwarazm and other countries as a talented scientist. The traveler (Zeynalabdin Shirvani) in the novel "Eldan-Ela" is also shown as a dervish of the sect, and in the "Nematullahi" sect, which is mentioned as "Nimatullahiyya" (*Bunyadov, 2007, p. 279*) in the book "Religions, sects, denominations" by academician Ziya Bunyadov, "Masteli shah"

it was mentioned that he was a member of a sect known by the nickname. Here, the writer criticizes Zeynalabdi, who is separated from his homeland, worried, bored, and eager to learn, in the section of the work called "Halimatun – Nisabayim". This scene created by the writer reminds of the meeting of Nushaba and Iskandar in N. Ganjavi's poem "Iskandername". In the "Halimatun-Nisabayim" section of the work, Nisabayim does not like Zeynalabdi's suggestion that the dervishes should leave the homeland to get away from tyranny, and he says: "If the youth of El-Oba are all involved in dervishism and involve others in it, what will be the continuity of the nation?" (*Jafarzade, 1992, p. 248*). In the work, the section called "Akhtaran tapar" reflects the writer's effective thoughts on racial, religious, and national issues. Here, the Christian priest Constantine's opinion "The world is the prison of the believers, the paradise of the infidel" (*Jafarzade, 1992, p. 273*) shows that the world's political upheavals and people's discontents are not only at the racial and religious level, but also in a pitiable human situation. In the part of the novel entitled "Perfection", the writer shows that the root of the unpleasant events in the world, wars, language, religion, and racial discrimination, the main character's combative behavior in disputes with members of other sects, and his attempts to encourage peoples to religious tolerance and coexistence reveal the idea of the work. If we look at the results of the work, it can be said that sectarianism and religious illiteracy are factors that harm multiculturalism. A person's religious beliefs, the path of the sect and the diversity of these sects are characterized as a factor that casts a shadow on the joint and successful future that the writer tries to convey in the work.

Doris Lessing, a prominent writer of English literature, a fantasist, a feminist, a Nobel laureate in literature, is the author of novels that contain various explanations of the philosophical problematics of humanity's passive participation in the struggle of powerful civilizations. One of the main distinguishing features of Doris Lessing's literary legacy is the issue of Eastern influence. Space fiction, which Lessing turned to in the last stage of his work and is considered by many Western literary scholars as a simple fiction genre, actually contains deep Eastern worldview canons. This quality takes him from the level of a simple experimentalist writer and turns him into a writer guided by ideas of self and identity in a globalized world. On the other hand, by bringing Eastern themes and ideas to Western literature, Lessing acts as a messenger, unites different civilizations, and helps establish a dialogue between them. The author himself divided his work into three periods in terms of subject matter. These are the period of Sufism characterized by socialism (1944–1956), psychologism (1956–1969) and more science fiction, in which he was a member of the "Left Book Club" and in which he devoted an important place to social criticism. In the latter period, Lessing wrote fantastic novels such as "Instructions for the Descent into Hell" (1971), "The Summer Before the Age of Sunset" (1973), "Marriages between the Third, Fourth and Fifth Zones" (1980), "Experiments in the Star of Sirius" (1981), "The Eight Planets", "Establishment of the Committee of Representatives for" (1982). Philip Glass composed an opera based on the motifs of the novel "Planet Eight".

In her own life as well, Lessing is constantly being explored for her concern with traditional gender issues and their implications. From the point of view of feminism and also the problem of racism, it is noted that the novel *The Grass is Singing*, which earned him the Nobel Prize, is very valuable. *The Grass is Singing*, published in 1950, is the first novel of English author Doris Lessing. It takes place in South Africa, Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) in the 1940s and tells the story of racial discrimination between whites and blacks in that country (then a British colony). It follows an emotionally immature woman's hasty marriage to a failed farmer and her subsequent mental breakdown, his murder, and the reactions of colonial British society. The novel created a sensation when it was first published, and was a notable success in Europe and the United States. One of the main reasons for writing the novel "The grass is

singing" is Lessing's childhood memories from colonial Rhodesia and the injustices he saw against blacks. It is known that the life he spent in the provinces of Africa became the source of his inexhaustible writer's inspiration for a long time. It should be noted here that the writer Aziza Jafarzade also traveled to Ghana in 1965–1966, and the events she saw and the environment she met there influenced her works and literary activity as well as the work of Doris Lessing. Doris Lessing's "The Grass is Singing" tries to reflect the culture-society conflicts that arise due to the differences between white and black people due to her close observation of the colonial system in Southern Rhodesia, a British colony. As a result of this, a real and at the same time imaginary, both individual and public, local and universal work has emerged. This once again proves the difference and uniqueness of the work "The Grass is Singing" and its author. Doris Lessing, who constantly emphasizes the futility of racial and sexual discrimination in her works, aims to convey to her readers the reflection of the opinion that different races can never mix with each other through her novels, and the most vivid example of this is Mary Turner, the main character of "The Grass is Singing". He overcomes the class-racial framework of the colonial society of which he is a part, and approaches the concept of "human being" who should not be differentiated according to his religion, race, language, and gender. Doris Lessing writes in her lecture: "Man is unfairly exploited, devalued and unaware of his abilities" (*Galim, 1997, p. 30*).

Doris Lessing describes in this work that whites despised Africans, did not respect blacks, and considered Africans as inferior individuals who should always remain below them. On the other hand, blacks also hate whites and resent the way whites treat them in their own land, especially since the days of colonialism. This artwork used many symbols to better understand the subject of apartheid in South Africa. The last chapter of the work describes the great tragedy caused by race and class conflict by examining three different individual spaces. The final section emphasizes the importance of interpreting "The Grass is Singing" using the theory of spatial criticism. It also shows that space is a non-homogeneous field caused by all kinds of forces. Whatever the location, a harmonious balance of all factors is a must. Social development requires a consistent multidimensional space. People can live and develop together in a harmonious space through constant communication and understanding between different people. As a conclusion that can be drawn from his works, it is noted that a person cannot come to the idea of human identity without fully understanding himself within the framework of individual identity, otherwise it is meaningless to talk about any idea of humanism, to analyze their significance and importance.

Correspondingly, in the "On the Road" section of the novel "Elden – Ele", the writer Aziza Jafarzadeh brings out the following reasoning during the conversation with Zeynalabdin of the dervishes of the Bektashi sect: "You have a particle of creation in you, whatever the creator created, he created it to make the world beautiful" (*Jafarzade, 1992, p. 37*). In this section of the novel, the writer's touch on the issue of human value, coexistence in the world, encouraging people to believe in their own strength, regardless of their identity, should be considered an important message. Since the novel "Eldan-Ela" is written in a simple, witty, attractive style typical of Aziza Jafarzade's work, it impresses the reader from the first sentences and forces him to experience the excitement of alternating events and situations throughout the plot. The internal structure of the novel, with its completeness and integrity, does not only carry an artistic-aesthetic feature, it allows to revive a lively, dynamic picture of the historical period as an example of a person's life. The opinions of Professor Ifrat Aliyeva, doctor of philology, who turned Aziza Jafarzade's creativity into an object of analysis at the level of modernity, are interesting in relation to the solution of the problem: "The result of Aziza Jafarzade's approach to history as a writer from today's position is that, just like in fantastic movies, history really

turns into today, and today's begins to serve their problems" (*Aliyeva, 2001, p. 54*). It is interesting that Aziza Jafarzade's novel "Eldan-Ela" stands out for its impressive expression of the spirit of modernity, unlike other works written in Azerbaijani prose. In other words, along with the historical context of the events and stories described by Aziza Jafarzadeh Zeynalabdin Shirvani regarding life and struggle, the aspect of modernity is equally relevant. The literary-artistic value of Aziza Jafarzade's novel "Eldan-Ela" is not limited only to its idea-problem features; the novel also has irreplaceable qualities in terms of genre and form, craftsmanship. The novel "Eldan-Ela" is not only the first historical novel in Azerbaijani prose that tells about the life of a traveler, but it is also characterized by its own genre type, form-style qualities. The events and stories that are the foundation of the novel's multi-faceted, complex plot are revealed against the background of historical sources and a comparative description of the travel notes and impressions of the main character of the work, Haji Zeynalabdin Shirvani. In the language and style of the work, the unquenchable torch of Azerbaijani literature has determined the originality of the genre type, with shades originating from the customs and traditions, ethnic differences, and national colors of the individual countries of the East. In the mentioned historical novel, the author was able to see and show the real picture of the period with the power of artistic imagination, in addition to benefiting only from sources based on accurate scientific facts and existing travelogues. In other words, the fusion of historical and artistic imagination in the novel "Eldenela" created unity and ensured the genre difference of the work. Although the writing of the novel on a historical subject allowed the author to benefit from the traditional principles of the genre at many points, he followed a more original path and significantly enriched the existing forms with new shades.

3. Conclusions

Approaching literature from the direction of multicultural values is considered one of the fundamental aspects that determine its greatness. In Aziza Jafarzade's works, the endless respect for scientists and writers belonging to other nations is reflected, and Doris Lessing's works depict the feeling of sincere attitude towards different beliefs and places, which is not only an artistic expression of the public opinion of her time, but also a manifestation of the worldview of her time. Both Aziza Jafarzadeh and Doris Lessing analyze the topics of different cultures in their works and urge people to understand and appreciate the intercultural difference. Thus, it is especially relevant in terms of the fact that such works reflect different individual and universal problems, as well as the problems of multicultural values, racial discrimination, their elimination, polyphonic relations outside the established "laws" and different approaches to "foreign" people. The desire to understand humanity as a whole, the need to look for the factors that unite different peoples with spiritual lines, the attempt to bring religions closer together, equal respect for the saints of different religions, the morality of valuing people not according to their race, but according to their value, and inviting everyone to mercy and compassion are the writers of these and it forms the basis of his other works. The analysis of the works of writers who guided themselves by the criteria of humanism in their works, regardless of whether they had feminist views or Sufi approaches at each stage of their creativity, shows that they address a wide range of problems. In these works, ideas that may seem quite different at first glance replace each other, but mainly the ideas of universal humanism are important.

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